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Chairperson: Mr. Penke ..... (Latvia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 64: Report of the Human Rights Council (A/64/7/Add.3, A/64/53, A/64/353; A/C.3/64/3)

1. **The Chairperson** drew the Committee's attention to the letter dated 28 October from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairperson of the Third Committee (A/C.3/64/3), informing the Chairperson that the General Assembly had decided to consider the report of the Human Rights Council on its twelfth special session, as contained in document A/64/53/Add.1, directly in plenary meeting, without setting a precedent.

2. **Mr. Van Meeuwen** (President of the Human Rights Council), introducing the report of the Human Rights Council on its tenth and eleventh sessions and eighth to eleventh special sessions (A/64/53), said that the Council had addressed various human rights issues, held dialogues with a number of special procedures mandate holders and interacted positively with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. It had reviewed 48 countries under the universal periodic review process, established a new mandate in the field of cultural rights and further broadened its human rights agenda. The Third Committee would be taking action on Council resolution 11/7 on guidelines for the alternative care of children, and decision 11/117 on issuance of reports of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review in all official languages of the United Nations.

3. The Council continued to innovate: new formats and flexible mechanisms for the discussion of human rights issues had been established to promote interaction and dialogue and increase participation by experts, national human rights institutions and civil society, mindful of the fundamental importance of involving all stakeholders in its work. Panel discussions had been organized on various issues, for example the right to food, and human rights and climate change, with a view to increasing awareness and achieving concrete results.

4. The Council had reacted quickly to urgent human rights situations, holding special sessions on the situation of human rights in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; grave human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly due to the recent Israeli military attacks against the occupied Gaza Strip; the impact of the global economic and financial crises on the universal realization and effective enjoyment of human rights; and assistance to Sri Lanka in the promotion and protection of human rights.

5. The upcoming five-year review of the Council would provide an opportunity to consolidate the gains made in the first years of its existence and also recognize its weaknesses by adjusting its mechanisms and methods of work with a view to better implementation of human rights commitments and further strengthening the Organization's human rights machinery. That would require the collaboration and commitment of the entire membership of the Council, civil society and all stakeholders.

6. **Ms. Schlyter** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the candidate country the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; and, in addition, Georgia and Ukraine, recalled that the General Assembly had decided that agenda item 64, on the report of the Human Rights Council, would be considered in both the General Assembly and the Third Committee on the understanding that the Committee would only consider and, if necessary, take action on, resolutions and decisions recommended for adoption or implementation by the General Assembly. The European Union would address the report of the Human Rights Council in its entirety in the General Assembly and restrict its remarks at the current meeting to the relevant recommendations.

7. The European Union took note of Council decision 11/117 on issuance of reports of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review in all official languages of the United Nations, according to which all reports of the universal periodic review must be translated into all official languages before their adoption by the Council and made widely available. It also took note of the guidelines for the alternative care of children contained in the annex to Council resolution 11/7 and looked forward to discussing those matters in the Committee.

8. **Mr. Ashiki** (Japan) commended the Human Rights Council for its work but said that its report should be presented directly to the General Assembly. The Council's mandate was to broaden international cooperation in the field of human rights and respond rapidly to urgent human rights situations. The Third

Committee, as a universal forum, allowed all nations to express their views on human rights issues and gain an understanding of what other countries were doing in that area. The two should cooperate and take advantage of each other's strengths.

9. His delegation would participate actively in the forthcoming review of the functioning of the Council in the hope of strengthening its ability to respond rapidly and constructively to gross and systematic human rights violations. It would also continue to support the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in its efforts to promote human rights.

10. He underscored his delegation's concern at continued discrimination against victims of leprosy, which was a curable disease. It had played an active role in the elaboration by the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee of a draft set of principles and guidelines for elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members and had recently submitted a draft resolution on that topic to the Council, which had been adopted by consensus at its 12th session. In the coming years his delegation would sponsor a resolution in the General Assembly on international cooperation to eliminate discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and would continue to play a leading role in that area.

11. **Mr. Tolkach** (Russian Federation) said that in its first three years the Human Rights Council had begun to depoliticize the human rights dialogue and had facilitated constructive discussion of human rights questions within the United Nations. He welcomed the institution of thematic panel discussions and meetings, through which considerable independent expertise could be brought to bear on current issues and also noted the constructive attitude of participants in the universal periodic review procedure and the objective approach displayed in the outcomes. The Russian Federation, which had been the subject of the review procedure in February and June 2009, had agreed to accept over 70 per cent of the recommendations made and was already implementing them.

12. He was however concerned at the manner in which some of the special rapporteurs interpreted their mandates, in disregard of the Council's Code of Conduct for Special Procedures Mandate-holders, which was a necessary tool for ensuring mutually respectful and constructive dialogue between Member States and the Council. Excessive attention paid to the situation in particular countries and regions was detracting from the universal focus which the thematic procedures were intended to adopt. Moreover, a polarization was taking place in the Council around the interests of different groups of States, and differences of principle were emerging in the understanding of human rights in general, and the role of the Council in particular.

13. He also deplored the double standards adopted at Council meetings by a number of States when policy decisions had to be taken. Some States sought to use human rights to exert pressure on the political situation in a country, in order to achieve their own political or economic goals. Human rights questions must be discussed solely on a basis of equality and mutual respect, with the emphasis on concrete results. Human rights standards were universal, but the means of achieving them might vary, depending on the national and cultural characteristics of particular States. It was unacceptable for some States to condescendingly instruct others in human rights and democracy.

14. In order to depoliticize human rights, his delegation had initiated a discussion within the Council of the linkage between traditional values and human rights. Acknowledging that linkage would give greater weight to the concept of human rights as far as the ordinary person was concerned and help to correct the present distorted perception of human rights while strengthening respect for them. The forthcoming review of the Council's work would be especially significant in view of the integration of human rights into all aspects of the work of the United Nations. He welcomed the decision to launch the intergovernmental discussion of the question within the Council itself. It was hoped that all parties concerned would participate actively in the forthcoming reform process.

15. **Mr. Attiya** (Egypt) said that, through its Council membership, his country sought to focus on the complementary relation between national and international institutions on the one hand, and between the various human rights mechanisms on the other hand. That approach would strengthen collective action, while avoiding politicization and ensuring that the Council did not focus on certain rights to the detriment of others. All States should undergo the universal periodic review process on an equal footing. They should cooperate with special procedures mandate holders, including by extending invitations

and responding promptly to correspondence. In return, the mandate holders should keep to their mandates, seek to establish a dialogue with States, and ensure that their reports were objective and based on reliable information.

16. The Committee should reject attempts to take ownership of human rights issues on the basis of an unfounded belief in the superiority of certain models. The General Assembly and Economic and Social Council were responsible for supervising the Human Rights Council, special procedures mandates and treaty bodies. Country-specific resolutions should not be submitted to the Third Committee in order to bypass the Human Rights Council. Staff members should not be appointed to monitor human rights in the context of development programmes. The Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights must receive the financial support necessary for the fulfilment of their mandates. By providing advice and technical support, the Council could complement the work of the Committee and of Governments.

17. By endorsing the report of the Council without a vote, the General Assembly would assert its determination to address human rights in a constructive and balanced manner. His delegation looked forward to further efforts to realize the right to development. In accordance with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the international community should combat discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, language or religion, especially where minorities and migrants were affected. In so doing, it should eschew conditionalities and controversial concepts which had no basis in international law and ignored the diversity of societies, cultures and values.

18. **Mr. Sammis** (United States of America) said that his delegation's decision to join the Human Rights Council had been based on a vision of what could be accomplished together with the Council and all Member States in a spirit of mutual respect. That vision was not an American vision but one that reflected the aspirations embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the mandate of the Council. Human rights and democracy were essential for sustained prosperity and lasting security. His delegation's approach to the Council's work would be guided by four tenets: the universality of human rights, dialogue among nations and peoples, principled engagement, and fidelity to the truth.

19. His delegation would support what the Council did well but pledged to challenge actions that might undermine its effectiveness. The members of the Council must build partnerships, listen and learn from one another and find common ground. His delegation would steadfastly affirm the responsibility of all Governments, including its own, to implement the rights and freedoms spelled out in international human rights law and with a view to improving the lives of victims and preventing abuses.

20. The report of the Council reflected the broad scope of its work and its heavy workload. Looking back on the Council's work in the past year, there was much with which his delegation could agree as well as much with which it took strong exception. It supported for example the Council's considerable work on women's issues, trafficking in persons, Somalia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was however disappointed by the Council's failure to seriously address grave situations, for example in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and its continued one-sided treatment of Israel. His delegation had not been able to support the many resolutions targeting Israel, in large part because they criticized the Government of Israel while making no mention of Hamas.

21. His country was committed to working to strengthen the Organization's human rights mechanisms and improve its ability to improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable people. The United Nations and its Member States and the victims of human rights violations around the world in particular deserved no less.

22. **Mr. Ndimeni** (South Africa) commended the Human Rights Council for its work but expressed concern at the inadequate funding of the Council, in particular with regard to the translation into all official languages of reports submitted in the context of the universal periodic review process. He encouraged the President of the Council to make every effort to ensure that that issue was addressed and assured him of his delegation's support in those endeavours.

23. He looked forward to the forthcoming review of the Council's work, which should deal inter alia with the relation between the Council and the Third Committee. He therefore welcomed the establishment of the open-ended intergovernmental working group on the review of the work and functioning of the Human

Rights Council and looked forward to participating actively in its discussions.

24. **Mr. Pak** Tok Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) reiterated his country's rejection of Human Rights Council resolution 10/16 on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, contained in the report of the Council. That resolution had been adopted despite the opposition of many Council members. As a result, the Council had been abused by some member States that wished to politicize its work and impose double standards.

25. The Council had been established in the hope of promoting dialogue and cooperation for the promotion of human rights, in contrast to the confrontation and mistrust that had prevailed in the Commission on Human Rights. The universal periodic review provided a mechanism for the equal treatment of the human rights situation of every country, but the politically motivated actions of some States risked undermining that mechanism.

26. His delegation firmly opposed country-specific resolutions, which were a clear manifestation of politicization, selectivity, and double standards. While his delegation valued the international human rights bodies and their work, it would not tolerate any irresponsible or discriminatory actions. His Government would continue to guarantee the human rights, freedom and well-being of its people in law and practice based on the principle of people-centred actions and would likewise continue to support the worldwide promotion and protection of human rights.

27. **Ms. Pérez Álvarez** (Cuba) said that the Human Rights Council, established the following extensive consultations, had proven its worth as a representative and democratic forum for discussion in replacement of the discredited and politicized Commission on Human Rights. The Council had succeeded in asserting its role despite the opposition of certain States, which constituted a triumph for the South countries in particular.

28. While challenges remained to the Council's role as a forum for dialogue and cooperation, for example the continuation of country-specific special procedures, in a relatively short period of time it had shown itself to be an effective mechanism for the promotion of human rights. The innovative universal periodic review mechanism was fully operational and had considered the reports of more than 80 countries. That mechanism must be further consolidated and strengthened. The Council had also shown its ability to respond to urgent human rights situations of international importance, adopting, for example, resolutions on the human rights violations by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and holding special sessions on issues including the impact of the global economic and food crises on the universal realization and effective enjoyment of human rights.

29. The Council must continue to ensure a collective and effective response to crises that threatened human rights worldwide. Those who criticized the work of the Council because they had lost their special status or advocated reform aimed at a return to the selectivity of the Commission on Human Rights should instead join with the Council in promoting a world where everyone had the right to justice and development. The Council must ensure that the right to development of the developing countries was not sacrificed to efforts to rescue the financial sector during the current economic crisis.

30. Hunger would continue to increase in a world characterized by injustice and inequality. The Council must therefore ensure that economic, social and cultural rights were accorded just as high a priority as civil and political rights. She also stressed the need for special procedures mandate holders to carry out their work in a non-selective and impartial manner and in accordance with their mandates.

31. The report of Cuba had been considered by the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review in February 2009; the results of that review confirmed the progress made through the Cuban revolution. Lastly, she echoed the urgent concern voiced by the representative of South Africa concerning the underfunding of the Council, in particular with regard to translation into all official languages of reports relating to the universal periodic review.

32. **Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) underscored his delegation's commitment to constructive dialogue with international human rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council. Morocco had played an important role in establishing the working methods of the universal periodic review and ensuring that that innovative mechanism would reliably and objectively review States' human rights needs and capacities, and had helped define the relationship between the Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human

Rights. It had submitted its first report under the universal periodic review process and worked actively to strengthen the Council as well as other human rights mechanisms.

33. He noted the holding of a seminar on education and human rights training held in Marrakesh in July 2009, welcomed Council decision 12/118 (A/HRC/DEC/12/118) on a United Nations declaration on human rights education and training and looked forward to the establishment of flexible and effective mechanisms in that regard. He likewise welcomed Council resolution 12/4 (A/HRC/RES/12/4) on the World Programme for Human Rights Education and General Assembly resolution 63/169 on the role of the Ombudsman, mediator and other national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights.

34. His Government had hosted a mission of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in June 2009, the first of its kind in an Arab and Muslim African country. The Working Group had noted the role played by Morocco's Equity and Reconciliation Commission (IER), which served as an example for other countries, in particular in the region.

35. The forthcoming review of the work of the Council would provide an opportunity to strengthen the Council and its mechanisms. Efforts at the national level could not succeed in meeting human rights goals without a collective commitment on the part of the international community. The United Nations, Governments and civil society must therefore promote partnerships, strengthen local capacity and encourage participation by all stakeholders with a view to overcoming remaining challenges in the promotion and protection of human rights.

36. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (China) commended the Human Rights Council for its work, in particular its holding of special sessions on the current financial and food crises, with particular attention to the effects of those crises on the developing countries and vulnerable groups. The Council must however continue to improve its mechanisms with a view to eliminating the politicization and double standards of the Commission on Human Rights and adhering to the fundamental principles of impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity. It must respect differing points of view, enhance mutual understanding and cooperation through dialogue and consider human rights issues in a constructive manner.

37. The purpose of the forthcoming five-year review of the Council's work was not to start all over again but rather to identify shortcomings and improve the functioning of the Council. He therefore welcomed Council resolution 12/1 on the establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental working group on the review of the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council. All parties should participate in the group's work in a constructive manner with a view to strengthening communication and ensuring a productive review.

38. China worked tirelessly to promote human rights at the domestic level. His delegation had always met its responsibilities as a member of the Human Rights Council in good faith. It would continue to encourage dialogue and cooperation within the Council and ensure that human rights issues were considered in an impartial, objective and non-selective manner with a view to achieving the noble objective of promoting and protecting human rights.

39. **Mr. Toder** (Ukraine) said that the Human Rights Council represented a historic opportunity to promote the dignity of all persons. Its fourth report illustrated the steady progress made in institution-building. His delegation hoped that the universal periodic review would make an important contribution to dialogue on, and implementation of, human rights standards. However, the interrelation between the universal periodic review and the treaty bodies needed to be addressed. Although both were essential, their legal bases and applications were distinct. It was therefore important to examine the synergy between the two. The treaty body mechanisms could and should be strengthened through the universal periodic review.

40. **Ms. Sobhan** (Bangladesh) said that the introduction of the universal periodic review was one of the most significant innovations in the field of human rights. Its universality was its greatest strength, with all countries facing scrutiny regardless of their region, size or influence. It would make controversial country-specific mechanisms a thing of the past. The credibility of the United Nations human rights system depended upon satisfactory implementation of the review. With the active participation of Member States and the proper implementation of its recommendations,

human rights situations around the world would be improved.

41. Her delegation welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/167, which addressed the staff composition of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The resolution was a necessary step in order to support the Council's mandate. In particular, her delegation welcomed the reference in paragraph 1 to equitable geographic distribution. It would have been preferable for the resolution to have been adopted without a vote. Her delegation also appreciated the adoption of Human Rights Council resolution 11/4 on promotion of the right of peoples to peace.

42. Bangladesh was broadly satisfied with the Council's progress thus far. The Council could ill afford to make any false steps. It must constantly take stock of its operations and maintain high standards. The special procedures system was an important way to promote and protect human rights. Her delegation therefore welcomed Human Rights Council resolution 11/11 on the system of special procedures. However, a few special procedures mandate holders appeared to have gone beyond their mandates, and some had submitted inappropriate or insufficient reports.

43. The fact that a report had been considered by the Council did not mean that the topic in question could be omitted or treated in a cursory manner before the General Assembly, which represented all States Members of the United Nations. Unnecessary proliferation of new mandates should be avoided, as should granting undue importance to a particular issue or thematic area. The special procedures should be viewed as a whole to see where there were gaps or overlaps. A piecemeal approach would be counterproductive.

44. **Mr. Benmehidi** (Algeria) said that his country appreciated the Council's intensive work across a range of areas, and in particular the increasing focus on such topics as climate change and the global economic and financial crisis. The Council had become something akin to a permanent body, meeting in various configurations for 35 weeks each year. It was thus able to respond to emergency situations, and its status should be revised accordingly. The universal periodic review had helped establish the principle of non-selectivity by addressing all States on an equal footing. Algeria had undergone the review process and approved most of the recommendations, which were now being implemented. His country had also played an active part in considering other States' reports.

45. As the coordinator of the African Group, Algeria had contributed to the adoption of Human Rights Council resolution 5/2 containing the Code of Conduct for Special Procedures Mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council, which had been endorsed by General Assembly resolution 62/219. The Code of Conduct would ensure the independence, moral authority, credibility and efficiency of special procedures mandate holders. Lastly, his delegation welcomed the adoption without a vote of General Assembly resolution 63/117 containing the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which opened the way for communications by or on behalf of individuals.

46. **Ms. Blum** (Colombia) commended the Human Rights Council for its ongoing work to promote human rights and expressed her delegation's support in particular for its resolutions on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, which had been introduced by her delegation, alternative care of children, implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, human rights education, trafficking in persons, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, violence against women and protection of human rights while countering terrorism.

47. The Council's consideration of the report of Colombia in the context of the universal periodic review process and its recommendations had been immensely valuable to domestic human rights institutions. The Council had taken note of progress made by her Government in guaranteeing respect for human rights. Her delegation had made 69 commitments following that review and accepted 96 recommendations.

48. Her Government had established a mechanism made up of representatives of the Presidential Human Rights Programme and the human rights directorates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior and Justice to ensure implementation of the outcome of the review. Regular progress reports with updates would be submitted every four months. The first such report had been submitted in June of the current year and posted on the Presidential Human Rights Programme website.

49. **Ms. Nakornthap** (Thailand) said that the Council had shown its versatility in responding to a number of urgent situations such as climate change, the global economic and financial crisis and the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In order for it to be effective, the principles of cooperation, dialogue, objectivity and non-selectivity must be upheld. The Council's attention to women's and children's issues was encouraging. Thailand had sponsored Human Rights Council resolution 11/8 on preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights, which highlighted the human rights dimension of that issue and the connection between human rights and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It was hoped that that resolution would promote efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5, improving maternal health.

50. Her country had also sponsored Human Rights Council resolutions 10/2 on human rights in the administration of justice, in particular juvenile justice, and 11/2 on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. Both drew attention to the issue of women and girls in prison, which her country was addressing through a national project. A national commission had begun drafting a new legislative framework. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime would convene an intergovernmental expert group in Bangkok in November 2009 to begin work in that area.

51. The universal periodic review had thus far elicited a positive response, and she hoped that the trend towards a truly cooperative mechanism would continue. Even though Thailand would not undergo the process until late 2011, the country had begun preparations for a national report. She was grateful to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for organizing a regional briefing on the topic, which would take place in November 2009. Thailand would be a candidate to became a member of the Human Rights Council for the period 2010-2013.

52. **Ms. Shahar-Ben Ami** (Israel) said that one of the difficulties facing the Council was to establish its legitimacy and overcome the credibility deficit left by the Commission on Human Rights. Like many other States, Israel had advocated substantive reforms in the Council's working methods, mandate, functions and composition. However, despite some marginal improvements, the Council had thus far failed to live up to its founding principles. Its most recent report to the General Assembly illustrated the erosion of its credibility and professionalism: it disregarded serious human rights violations in many parts of the world, including by members of the Council.

53. Under General Assembly resolution 60/251, the work of the Council should be guided by the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity. However, more resolutions and decisions had been adopted on Israel than on all of the other States Members of the United Nations combined. At the same time, the Council had remained deafeningly silent in the face of the terrorist attacks suffered by Israelis. Some members were increasingly manipulating human rights issues in a manner that threatened the very integrity of the Council and of the United Nations.

54. Israel was committed to safeguarding human rights and to engaging in candid and professional dialogue through various United Nations mechanisms, including the universal periodic review. Israel should be subject to review and constructive criticism on a fair and impartial basis and asked only that the international community stand by its own principles.

55. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica) recalled that he had chaired the sixty-second session of the Committee, when it had first considered the Council's report. The core issue at the time had been the institutional architecture of the Council. There was now a more or less settled arrangement for the division of duties between the Committee, the Council and the General Assembly in plenary session. The Committee had an abiding responsibility to discuss the deliberations of the Council. Not all Member States were represented in the Council, and the Committee was mandated to consider all human rights issues.

56. The universal periodic review process had been intended to avoid the issue of country-specific resolutions, which remained highly divisive. His country believed that the Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights must be provided with the necessary financial resources in order to fulfil their mandates. His delegation wished to know if the President of the Human Rights Council could comment on the extent to which the universal periodic review process had succeeded in being fair and objective. He asked the question only for clarification; the Committee retained the right to

consider all human rights issues and the broader universal periodic review process.

57. **Mr. Percaya** (Indonesia) said that the Council had made substantial progress in a considerably short period of time. While Indonesia valued the positive contributions of all special procedures mandate holders in the area of human rights, there remained some cases in which mandate holders had not complied with the Code of Conduct. Mandate holders must strictly observe the terms of their mandate. He also wished to highlight a procedural issue concerning the granting of credentials to a certain delegation. The Committee must take a timely decision and immediately convey it to the other relevant United Nations bodies, and in particular the Council. The High Commissioner should intensify efforts to achieve geographic balance in staffing.

58. His delegation welcomed the Council's endorsement through resolution 11/7 of the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, which included provisions on tracing, family reintegration and emergency care. It appreciated the Council's focus on vulnerable groups, and its increasing attention to economic, social and cultural rights on an equal footing with civil and political rights. The Council's discussion of the impact of the current economic and financial crisis on the enjoyment of human rights was also welcome.

59. The division of work between the Committee and the Council required greater attention. The Committee should focus on a more policy-oriented discussion and provide strategic policy recommendations to the General Assembly. Those recommendations would guide the international community, including the Council, in the promotion and protection of human rights. Reviews of countries belonged within the purview of the Council and should be conducted through such established mechanisms as the universal periodic review.

60. The most effective aspects of the review process would be recognized during the second cycle, when States would be in a position to report back on the implementation of recommendations. Lastly, while it was important for human rights to be discussed through a range of thematic issues, the Council should avoid making those thematic issues too broad or numerous, something that might make its work less focused in the long term.

61. **Ms. Abdelmageed** (Sudan) said that the Council had adopted important resolutions on health, education, freedom of expression, the rights of refugees and displaced persons, transitional justice and the report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (A/HRC/12/48). The Council should be strengthened in order to pursue its mandate through dialogue, cooperation and technical assistance for national capacity-building, avoiding politicization and selectivity in its work. Her country would continue its dialogue with the Council, and was preparing to undergo the universal periodic review process in 2010.

62. **Ms. Basso** (France) said that her country had been a member of the Council since its inception and was committed to promoting its activities in a spirit of objectivity and equality. Special procedures mandate holders must be independent. The Council should have the capacity to address specific thematic issues and any human rights violations wherever they occurred. Her country remained committed to engaging with all partners in order to promote and protect human rights.

63. **Mr. Klepsch** (Germany) said that his country greatly valued the credibility and effectiveness of the Council and was satisfied with the work of the special procedures mandate holders. He called on States to improve cooperation with them instead of criticizing their compliance with their mandate.

64. **The Chairperson** said that the Committee had thus concluded its general discussion of agenda item 64.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.